

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG
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AMEMBASSY OSLO
AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN
AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE
AMEMBASSY OTTAWA
AMEMBASSY LISBON
AMEMBASSY ANKARA
AMEMBASSY ATHENS

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 LONDON 02826

USOECN ALSO FOR EMBASSY, USEEC ALSO FOR EMBASSY

E O 11652: GDS
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SUBJECT: CONSULTATIONS WITH NATO ALLIES

REF: STATE 038167

1. THE PRINCIPAL TEST OF INTERNATIONAL MACHINERY IS
WHETHER IT HELPS PARTICIPANTS DO THEIR BUSINESS FAST AND
WELL. NATO AND THE OECD HAVE BEEN, AND WE BELIEVE WILL
CONTINUE TO BE, EFFECTIVE INSTRUMENTS OF U.S. FOREIGN
POLICY. AT THE SAME TIME, BOTH BODIES HAVE BECOME
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SCLEROTIC AND MUSCLE-BOUND AS THE YEARS HAVE PASSED AND
WASHINGTON HAS RELIED MORE ON AD HOC GROUPS TO GET OUR
BUSINESS DONE. BUT TENSION BETWEEN LARGE AND SMALL
GROUPS IS AS OLD AS THESE ORGANIZATIONS THEMSELVES AND
WE SEE NO REASON FOR ALARM OR EVEN SPECIAL CONCERN NOW.
FROM EMBASSY LONDON'S PERSPECTIVE, THE MIX IS JUST ABOUT
RIGHT.

2. NATO, IN OUR VIEW, HAS PROVEN CAPABLE OF PROBABLY THE FASTEST ACTION OF ANY MAJOR INTERNATIONAL BODY IN WHICH WE PARTICIPATE. ALLIANCE CONSULTATIONS HAVE BEEN EFFECTIVE ENOUGH NOT TO WARRANT EXTENSIVE PROLIFERATION OF AD HOC BODIES WHICH WOULD INEVITABLY WEAKEN THE COHESION OF NATO AT A TIME WHEN THERE ARE FEW OTHER STRONG INSTITUTIONAL ADHESIVES BETWEEN OURSELVES AND THE EUROPEANS OR INDEED AMONG THE EUROPEANS THEMSELVES. SO WE SHOULD CERTAINLY CONTINUE TO CONDUCT THE BULK OF OUR

MULTILATERAL SECURITY EFFORTS THROUGH NATO.

3. HOWEVER, THERE ARE INSTANCES WHEN SMALLER GROUPINGS ARE ALMOST INDESPENSIBLE. WITHOUT MBFR TRILATERALS IN RECENT YEARS, THE VIENNA SNAIL COULD HAVE PETRIFIED. THE FOUR POWER ARMAMENTS DIRECTORS FRAMEWORK HAS ALSO PROVED USEFUL. WHILE NOT RELATED TO NATO, THE CONTACT GROUP OF ALLIES WORKING ON NAMIBIA WOULD NOT HAVE PROSPERED IN AN EXISTING INSTITUTION.

4. SALT HAS BECOME A SPECIAL CASE. AS WASHINGTON KNOWS THIS SUBJECT OF CENTRAL CONCERN PROVOKES EXTREME NEURALGIA AMONG SMALLER ALLIES WHEN IT APPEARS THEY ARE BEING EXCLUDED FROM AN INNER CIRCLE. THUS, WE BELIEVE WE WOULD NEEDLESSLY BE COURTING TROUBLE TO SHIFT THE ESSENC
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OF SALT CONSULTATIONS FROM THE FIFTEEN TO THE FOUR, OR EVEN THREE. ON NUCLEAR ISSUES, WE ALSO SHOULD KEEP THE NPG WELL-OILED, FOR IT IS STILL THE FORMAL DEVICE FOR INVOLVING THE FRG IN NUCLEAR POLICY. WE CAN KEEP OUR MAJOR ALLIES INFORMED THROUGH FREQUENT BILATERAL DISCUSSIONS AND, IF NECESSARY, AS PART OF TRADITIONAL QUADRIPARTITE MEETINGS. BUT IN OUR JUDGMENT, AN INSTITUTIONALIZED SMALL GROUP TO DEAL EXCLUSIVELY WITH SALT AND OTHER NUCLEAR ISSUES WOULD DO MORE HARM THAN GOOD. IN TURN, WE SHOULD AVOID WAVING A RED FLAG AT LUNS OR THE SMALLER ALLIES WHILE AT THE SAME TIME ACCEPTING THE REALITY THAT, WHEN WE DO CONDUCT BUSINESS FIRST WITH THE MAJOR EUROPEAN NATIONS, WE MAY HAVE TO DEFLECT SOME COMPLAINTS FROM THE OTHERS. WE DON'T SEE WHY THAT SHOULD BE BEYOND US IF WE TAKE CARE TO PLAY IT RIGHT.

5. IN THE CASE OF THE OECD, THE ORIGINAL STRUCTURE OF THE ORGANIZATION WAS DESIGNED TO PROVIDE A BODY ALMOST EXCLUSIVELY FOR CONSULTATIONS RATHER THAN FOR COMMON OPERATIONAL PROGRAMS. AS THE ECONOMIC CONTENT OF FOREIGN POLICY MANAGEMENT HAS INCREASED, WE HAVE SOUGHT TO PLACE A BURDEN ON OECD, HOWEVER, WHICH IT IS NOT INHERENTLY

DESIGNED TO CARRY, WE BELIEVE. TO A VERY LARGE DEGREE
WE HAVE CIRCUMVENTED THIS INADEQUACY THROUGH THE USE OF
INFORMAL, RESTRICTED MEETINGS AT VARIOUS LEVELS AND RE-
LATED AD HOC ENTITIES FOR GETTING ON WITH THE BUSINESS
AT HAND. THESE AD HOC GROUPINGS ON THE OECD ARMATURE

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HAVE PROVIDED US OFTEN WITH THE MOMENTUM AND SUCCESS
NEEDED, BUT NOT WITHOUT THE COST OF FREQUENTLY IRRITA-
TING AND OCCASIONALLY STIMULATING NEGATIVE RESPONSES FRO
THE SMALLER AND MORE NEUTRAL MEMBERS OF THE ORGANIZATION
WHILE THE OECD AS AN INSTITUTION PROBABLY HAS NOT BEEN
DAMAGED, AT THE SAME TIME IT HAS NOT BEEN STRENGTHENED
AS AN INSTITUTION BY SIDE-STEPPING IT.

6. IN THE CASE OF BOTH NATO AND THE OECD, THE FORMATION

OF AD HOC BODIES HAS TENDED TO EXCLUDE THE INTERNATIONAL STAFFS OF BOTH ORGANIZATIONS, THUS FURTHER WEAKENING THE CONFIDENTIAL

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MORALE AND EFFECTIVENESS OF INDIVIDUALS WHO ARE OFTEN NOT ESPECIALLY ABLE ANYWAY. A MAJOR U.S. EFFORT WHICH STRENGTHENED THESE STAFFS WOULD MAKE THE ORGANIZATIONS MORE PRODUCTIVE AND AD HOC GROUPS LESS NECESSARY.

7. FROM HERE, IT APPEARS US-EC POLITICAL CONSULTATION IS SERVING ITS PRIMARY AND LIMITED PURPOSE: NO MAJOR SURPRISES FROM THE EUROPEANS. AT A TIME OF ECONOMIC TROUBLE AND POLITICAL WEAKNESS IN EUROPE ITSELF, WE SHOULD PROBABLY EXPECT NO MORE. NOR WILL AN ENLARGED EUROPEAN COMMUNITY MAKE US-EC CONSULTATION ANY EASIER. IF WE CAN IMPROVE THE CONTENT OF OUR CONTRIBUTION TO THIS TRANS-ATLANTIC DIALOGUE, EVEN IF ONLY marginally, WE SHOULD. BUT THAT SHOULD REST ONLY ON OUR LONG-TERM DESIRE TO PROMOTE EUROPEAN UNITY AND NOT ON AN IMMEDIATE HOPE THAT THE COMMUNITY AS THE COMMUNITY WILL BE AN EFFECTIVE INTERNATIONAL PARTNER FOR THE U.S.

8. IT IS ALMOST ACADEMIC WHETHER OUR RELATIONS WITH THE UK ARE ENHANCED OR DIMINISHED BY THE PROLIFERATION OF SMALLER CONSULTATIVE BODIES, SINCE THE UK INEVITABLY PARTICIPATES. INDEED, THE CLOSE RELATIONSHIP WE HAVE WITH THE BRITISH AT SO MANY LEVELS AND IN SO MANY INTERNATIONAL BODIES PAYS BIG DIVIDENDS AND HAS ALMOST NO DRAWBACKS. MOREOVER, THE BRITISH SO FAR HAVE BEEN READY TO PLAY THE GAME OF MAINTAINING A CLOSE BILATERAL RELATIONSHIP WITH US WHILE PARTICIPATING FULLY IN BROADER FORA ADDRESSING THE SAME ISSUES. AND DAVID OWEN LIKES SMALL GROUPS WHERE DECISIONS ARE MADE RATHER THAN DEFERRED. WE THINK HE WOULD PERSONALLY RESIST A SLAVISH REJECTION OF AD HOC ARRANGEMENTS. IN THE CASE OF BILATERAL RELATIONSHIPS, HOWEVER, WE SHOULD BEAR IN MIND THAT WE UNDERCUT INTERNATIONAL FORA BY CATERING BILATERALLY

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TO ALLIES THAT REJECT MULTILATERAL DISCUSSION OF SELECTED SENSITIVE ISSUES.

9. WE CONCLUDE THAT THE PRINCIPAL PROBLEM WE FACE IS HOW TO CONTINUE TO GET THE JOB DONE AS EFFECTIVELY AS POSSIBLE WHILE MAINTAINING THE SUPPORT OF OUR SMALLER ALLIES AND THE INSTITUTIONAL INTEGRITY OF THE KEY MULTI-

LATERAL ORGANIZATIONS. ON THE FIRST, WE SEE LITTLE HARM
IN CONSULTATIONS IN ANY MODE SO LONG AS CONSULTATIONS ON
SUBJECTS OF INTEREST TO ALL ALLIES ARE ALSO REPEAT ALSO
CARRIED FORWARD, TO THE EXTENT POSSIBLE, IN THE LARGER
BODIES. IF SOME DUPLICATION OF CONSULTATION RESULTS,
THE PRICE IS SMALL IN RELATION TO THE COSTS OF FAILING
TO TAKE ALL ALLIES INTO OUR CONFIDENCE. ON THE SECOND,
WE BELIEVE THAT WE SHOULD AVOID SITUATIONS IN WHICH WE
SERVE SHORT-TERM OBJECTIVES OF ACHIEVING OUR CONSULTA-
TIVE PURPOSES AT THE PRICE OF LONGER-TERM DAMAGE TO
INSTITUTIONAL STRUCTURES STEMMING FROM OVER-EMPHASIS ON
MORE RESTRICTED FORA. STREATOR

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